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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4404th meeting of the Security Council, held on 31 October 2001, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in East Timor", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the Secretary-General's report of 18 October 2001 (S/2001/983 and Corr.1).

"The Security Council expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General's Special Representative in East Timor and to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) for their efforts in developing detailed plans for the future United Nations presence in East Timor.

"The Security Council welcomes the political progress achieved to date towards establishing an independent East Timorese state and endorses the recommendation by the Constituent Assembly that independence be declared on 20 May 2002.

"The Security Council recalls resolutions 1272 (1999) of 25 October 1999 and 1338 (2001) of 31 January 2001 and other relevant resolutions. It agrees with the Secretary-General's assessment that premature withdrawal of the international presence could have a destabilizing effect in a number of crucial areas. It further agrees with the Secretary-General's assessment that the United Nations should remain engaged in East Timor to protect the major achievements so far realized by UNTAET, to build upon those achievements in cooperation with other actors, and to assist the East Timorese government in ensuring security and stability.

"The Security Council takes note of the Secretary-General's observation that the mandate of UNTAET should be extended until independence and endorses his plans for adjusting the size and configuration of UNTAET in the months prior to independence.

"The Security Council endorses the Secretary-General's recommendations for a continued and appropriately reduced United Nations integrated mission in the post-independence period, and requests the Secretary-General to continue planning and preparation for this mission, in consultation with the East Timorese people, and to submit further and more detailed recommendations to the Council. The Council agrees that the successor mission would be headed by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General

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and comprise of a military component, a civilian police component and a civilian component, including experts who would provide crucial assistance to the emergent East Timorese administration. The Council notes that a core number of civilian positions will be critical to the stability of the independent East Timorese government and agrees that these limited positions will require assessed funding for a period of between six months and two years after independence. The Council agrees that the new mission should be based on the premise that operational responsibilities should be devolved to the East Timorese authorities as soon as this is feasible, and it supports a continuing process of assessment and downsizing over a period of two years, starting from independence. In this regard, the Council recognizes the essential role of the General Assembly in peace-building and expresses its intention to continue planning for peace-building in close cooperation with the General Assembly. The Council acknowledges the importance of a strong focus on justice and human rights in the successor mission and, where appropriate, in other assistance provided to East Timor.

"The Security Council agrees with the Secretary-General's assessment that it will be vital that the United Nations contribution is supplemented by multilateral and bilateral arrangements. The Council looks forward to receiving information on the financial implications of the follow-on mission and a detailed assessment of shared responsibilities among the principal interacting players i.e. the United Nations system, international financial institutions, regional mechanisms and national donors in their efforts to assist East Timor in its unprecedented transition to self-government."